

From: [Eoc_Epahq](#)
Subject: EOC Spot Report: Region 6, Arkema Chemical Explosion, Crosby, TX (NRC#1188881) - Update #4
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EOC Spot Report: Region 6, Arkema Chemical Explosion, Crosby, TX (NRC#1188881) - Update #4

US Environmental Protection Agency
Report as of September 3, 2017 at 1730 EDT

Overview: As of Sunday, Sept. 3, multiple trailers of organic peroxide caught fire following the refrigeration units being compromised by catastrophic flood waters. One fire occurred on August 31 and the second occurred on September 1. The threat of additional fires or explosions remains. The facility's coolant system for the organic peroxide tanks and backup generators failed due to flooding from Tropical Storm Harvey. An evacuation order is still in effect for residents within a 1.5 mile-radius of the facility on August 30. On September 1 at approximately 1730 EDT, another explosion occurred resulting in a large fire with significant amounts of black smoke.

Arkema is a Risk Management Plan (RMP) facility. It manufactures organic peroxides and two substances, sulfur dioxide (anhydrous) and 2-methylpropene are present at, or above, the minimum threshold quantity for RMP applicability. There have been no accidental off-site releases of applicable RMP chemicals from the facility in the previous five years.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions: Harris County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is conducting air monitoring in the area. Unified Command (consisting of TCEQ and the Texas General Land Office, US Coast Guard and EPA) has determined that access to the facility is still unsafe and a 1.5-mile evacuation radius will remain in effect until further notice. Poison Control Centers are set up in Texas to help citizens who have health concern questions concerning the Arkema facility or other flood-related health questions.

It is the understanding of personnel on the ground that the remaining trailers are at risk of catching fire over the next few days. Rather than risk additional damage to the facility or

spreading into the surrounding area, the Crosby Volunteer Fire Department and the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office will perform a controlled burn of the material. First responders are outside the evacuation zone, but remain in the area, for quick response to ensure the safety of the community around the facility.

Local officials are maintaining a 1.5-mile area of evacuation to assure that the public is protected. Air monitoring has confirmed that this is sufficient based on current conditions and anticipated events.



Source: ASPECT on Sep 3, 2017

EPA Actions: EPA has deployed an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) to the scene. EPA emergency response personnel in Texas are in direct contact with first responders in Harris

County and are providing federal assistance and resources. Each day since the initial incident (August 30 – September 3), EPA ASPECT aircraft has conducted overflights of the Arkema facility and has not detected any vapors or thermal abnormalities above background. During the fire on September 1, 2017, EPA's ground air monitoring results outside of the exclusion zone were approximately 0.3 parts per million (ppm), below levels of health concern. At the request of the local jurisdiction and Harris County Pollution Control, EPA collected surface water runoff samples downstream of the facility at four locations near a residential area. The samples are being analyzed by EPA's mobile laboratory. EPA will continue to maintain a 24-hr presence with air monitoring capabilities at the incident command operations center. Unified Command at the Arkema site continues to coordinate with the EPA Region 6 Environmental Unit to determine locations on the site where flood water samples should be collected. Aerial reconnaissance photos indicate that flood waters within the facility have receded significantly.

EPA Region 6 is working with the FEMA Interagency Modeling Atmospheric Assessment Center (IMAAC) on modeling of anticipated future releases at the site. The modeling products are being delivered to Unified Command (consisting of TCEQ and the Texas General Land Office, US Coast Guard and EPA).

Media Interest: High

<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epatceq-statement-controlled-ignition-trailers-arkema-facility-crosby-texas>

<http://abc13.com/more-explosions-expected-while-other-toxic-sites-go-unchecked/2372451/>

<https://www.cnbc.com/2017/09/02/chemical-plant-explosion-thrusts-arkema-into-spotlight.html>

<http://abc13.com/more-explosions-expected-at-arkema-plant-in-crosby/2369548/>

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/09/02/flames-smoke-at-arkema-chemical-plant-near-houston.html>

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-09-02/arkema-s-texas-chemical-plant-burns-for-second-time-in-two-days>

HQ EOC will continue to monitor and provide updates as warranted.

Ben Larson, Watch Officer
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Headquarters Emergency Operations Center
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20004
202-564-3850
<mailto:eoc.epahq@epa.gov>